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A learned Judge in New Jersey in a recent address before the Lawyers Club of Newark, N. J., makes the following just criticism of many opinions written by American judges:

"The opinions of the judges are apt to read like lawyers' briefs or essays. They often read as if the judge had just looked up the law and thought it necessary to cite authorities for the most firmly settled propositions. The English opinions read as if the judge knew the existing state of decisions and assumed that everyone else did, and that it was his business to show necessary development from established principles and their application to the particular case. The opinions are shorter and more directly to the point, based more upon the reason of the thing and rely less upon the multitude of precedents. We encumber our reports with the citations of case after case, repeating the decision of legal principles about which nobody has any doubt, with the risk of misleading counsel by slight variations in the forms of expression, and wasting time by the cumulative citation of cases, where one authoritative case that settles the law is quite enough.

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Judge Lamm in *Forrister v. Sullivan et al* (Mo.), 132 S. W. 722, in speaking of the defendants in error said: "They had a last shot left in their locker." Is that what they call it in Missouri, or does a locker have a different meaning from what it does under our system?

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### IN VACATION.

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**Confession and Avoidance.**—A rural preacher at the conclusion of a sermon said:

"Let all in the house who are paying their debts stand."

Instantly every man, woman and child, with one exception, arose. The preacher seated them and said:

"Now, every man not paying his debts stand."

The exception noted, a care-worn, hungry-looking individual, clothed in his last summer's suit, slowly assumed a perpendicular position.

"How is it, my friend," asked the minister, "that you are the only man not able to meet his obligations?"

"I run a newspaper," he meekly answered, "and the brethren who just stood are my subscribers, and—"—*The Echo*.

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**"Civil Courts."**—She: "I thought you said this was a civil court?"  
He: "So it is."

She: "Why, those horrid lawyers in it were as rude as they could be."

**No Brute.**—"Did you strike this man in an excess of irascibility?"  
"No sah; I done hit him in the stummick."

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**Dark Persuasion.**—A southern lawyer tells this story: "The other day an old colored man came sauntering to me in my yard, where there was a pile of rubbish.

"'Morning John,' I said.

"'Morning, Marse Tom; don't you want that rubbish hauled away?"

"'What'll you take?' I asked.

"'Dollah a load, 'n I think it'll take jes' about two loads.'

"'I'll give you 75 cents a load,' I told him.

"'You remember me, do you, Marse Tom?"

"'Why, sure, John.'

"'Well, you remember when I was up for shootin' craps and you pleaded me guilty in police court?"

"'Sure,' I said.

"'An' you charged me \$10, an' I never said a dog-gone word!"

"John hauled the rubbish at \$1 a load, and he made three loads of it."—St. Paul Dispatch.

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## BOOK REVIEWS.

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All book reviews are by the Editor-in-Chief unless otherwise expressly stated.

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**The Lawyers Reports Annotated**, 1915 B. being Volume 54 L. R. A. (N. S.) Burdette A. Rich, Henry P. Farnham, Editors. To be cited L. R. A. 1915 B. The Lawyers Cooperative Publishing Company, Rochester, New York. 1915. Price \$5.00.

We were just in the midst of a busy term of the court when this volume was received. Within a half an hour after its reception we had occasion to use it in three separate cases and were enabled to find the law upon the subject needed in a minimum time. An examination of the volume convinces us that no lawyer's office can afford to be without the series, for ready reference and for valuable citation. We have been particularly struck with the following notes: On page 1, "Consideration for New Agreements Abrogating, Altering, Supplementing or Supplanting Prior Contracts;" on page 71, "Sufficiency of Description of Property in an Indictment for Larceny;" on page 109, a note upon a novel subject: "Automobile Distribution Contracts;" page 477, "Warranty upon Sale of Second Hand Article;" on page 729, "Presumption of Death from Absence;" on page 797, "Alteration of Stockholders Liability as Impairment of the Obligation of Contract." On page 827, "Places within Implied Invitation Extended to Passengers, or Persons on Business at Railroad Station;" on page 928, "Validity of Stipulation for Attorney's Fee." These are but a few out of many.